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Farm Broadcasters Letter

Letter No. 2273

CURRENT SIGNUP RECORDS

July 31, 1986

MORE ACRES FOR CONSERVATION RESERVE

Several million more acres of highly erodible cropland may now be eligible for the Conservation Reserve Program, according to Under Secretary of Agriculture Daniel Amstutz. If a field is eroding at a rate of at least two times the soil-loss tolerance level and that field has a gully problem based on an onsite inspection, then the field is eligible for the program. These fields would not have qualified for the CRP under the previous rules.

LYNG URGES SIGN UP

Sec'y of Agriculture Richard E. Lyng urged farmers to seriously weigh the benefits of participating in the Conservation Reserve Program. Said Lyng, "Before deciding whether to participate in the Conservation Reserve, farmers need to consider two things: The benefits of signing up and the consequences of not signing up." The current signup period is Aug. 4-15. Under the voluntary program, farmers enter into contracts to retire highly erodible cropland for 10 years. In return, the USDA makes annual rental payments to participating farmers and shares half the cost of establishing grass or trees on the land.

WHEAT TO S. AFRICA

South Africa purchased 66,000 tons of U.S. wheat, bringing the total since May to about 156,000 tons, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is substantially above the 27,000 tons of U.S. wheat exported to S. Africa in 1985/86. The sale was made despite tough competition from Australia, a major supplier of S. African wheat imports. There is a good possibility that S. Africa will purchase additional U.S. wheat. It's currently expected to import about 250,000 tons of wheat in 1986/87.

WHEAT EXPORTS IMPROVING

The forecast for 1986/87 wheat exports, as of July 11, remained unchanged for the third consecutive month at 29 million, 900 thousand tons, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The forecast is 5 million tons higher than exports in 1985/86, but still well below the record 1981/82 export level of 48 million tons. New wheat sales for the 4-week period ending July 17 were up almost 65 pct. over the previous 4-week period, as new crop wheat became more readily available and several countries made purchases under the Export Enhancement Program.

DROUGHT DISASTER AREAS

Between July 20 and July 30, Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng has designated counties in 3 states as disaster areas. They are: Virginia, 17 primary and 37 contiguous counties; North Carolina, 41 primary and 28 contiguous counties; South Caroline, 39 primary and 5 contiguous counties. In all these counties family farmers may qualify for FmHA emergency loss loan assistance.

CANADIAN WHEAT EXPORTS

Canadian wheat exports in 1986/87 are estimated at 19 million 5 hundred thousand tons, up 2 million 5 hundred tons from last year, as a result of projected record production. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, this and lower export prices due to reduced initial payments could increase competition faced by U.S. wheat in foreign markets. The Canadian Government has already prepared for another aggressive export program by proposing an increase in consumer wheat prices and adjusting other government programs to make Canadian wheat more competitive in world markets.

CANADA INVESTIGATES U.S.

The Canadian Government will begin an investigation of whether or not U.S. corn exports are subsidized, which could lead to a countervailing duty being applied to imported U.S. corn, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Such a duty, which would be the first ever applied by Canada to U.S. grain, could disrupt U.S. corn exports to Canada, but more importantly, could set a precedent for other countries to initiate similar investigations.

MEXICO JOINS GATT

Mexico became the 92nd country to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) when it signed the agreement on July 25, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Until the signing, Mexico was the United States' largest trading partner not in GATT. Mexico's membership will take effect 30 days after signature, in time for Mexico to participate in the new round of multilateral trade negotiations to begin in Uruguay in Sept.

FROM IMPORTER TO EXPORTER

Pakistan, a traditional wheat importing country, appears likely to export wheat in 1986/87, as record supplies from large carryover stocks and another bumper crop create storage problems, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. After importing an average of 1 million 3 hundred thousand tons in 1984/85 and 1985/86, an initial export goal of 500,000 tons has been announced for 1986/87, with Iran considered a likely market.

CORN EXPORT FORECAST

The U.S. Department of Agriculture corn export forecast for 1986/87, as of July 11, declined 1 million 900 thousand tons to 39 million 4 hundred thousand tons. The July corn export estimate for 1985/86 also fell 1 million 9 hundred thousand tons to 31 million 1 hundred thousand tons. Larger than expected corn supplies from other origins, increased competition in major Asian and Latin American markets, and continued pressure from subsidized or heavily discounted feed wheat have caused the lower corn estimate.

WEEKLY DAIRY CATTLE SLAUGHTER

An estimated 26,200 head of dairy cattle were slaughtered in federally-inspected plants during the week ending July 12, 1986, as a result of the Dairy Termination Program, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The cumulative total of cattle slaughtered under the program from April 1 through July 12 is an estimated 567,900 head. Dairy cattle reported for export under the program for the period April 1 through July 26 totaled an estimated 20,408 head.

FROM OUR
TELEVISION
SERVICE

DROUGHT IN SOUTHEAST...Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng, Assistant Secretary George Dunlop and USDA chief meteorologist Dr. Norton Strommen focus on the severe drought in the Southeastern U.S. and how it has affected crops and livestock in these areas. Vic Powell interviews. (241)

HOTLINE FOR DROUGHT-STRICKEN FARMERS...The U.S. Department of Agriculture has formed a task force, including a toll-free hotline, to help relieve farmers suffering from drought-related problems. Jim Boillot, deputy assistant secretary for governmental and public affairs and coordinator of that task force, describes how the hotline is meeting the needs of farmers. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (242)

CROP PRODUCTION UPDATE...USDA economist Michael Hanthorn takes a look at factors contributing to the current crop production forecast, including price increases for broilers, the supply-demand situation for cotton and projections for wheat, corn and soybean stocks. Vic Powell interviews. (243)

ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL PROGRAM...Bob Acord with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, comments on the success of the Animal Damage Control Program and the new direction being taken since its transfer to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (244)

RENTAL FARMLAND...Rental farmland is increasing in the U.S. as half of all farmland is rented to farmers by landowners who are not directly involved in agriculture. USDA economist Gene Wunderlich focuses on factors contributing to this situation. George Holmes interviews. (245)

FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1522...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) It seems that almost every part of the country claims that its particular style of barbecue is the best. George Holmes talks with two gentlemen from Tennessee who both claim to be barbecue "kings."

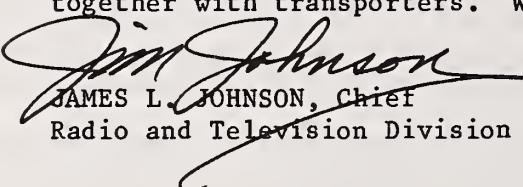
AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1511...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; A sheep referendum; A future heat wave?; Tax reform and agriculture.

CONSUMER TIME #1004...(Weekly reel of news features) Mortgage talk; Home businesses: Coping with failure; New career for a star; Ozone and our food supply; A skin growth stimulant.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Wed, Aug. 6, Livestock and poultry outlook; Tues, Aug. 12, U.S. crop production, Soviet crop outlook; World ag. supply and demand, Crop and weather update; Wed, Aug. 13, World crop production; World oilseed situation; World cotton situation; Thurs, Aug. 14, Milk production; Fri, Aug. 15, Cotton and wool outlook; Cattle on feed report. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

OFF MIKE

The NAFB Summer Meeting is history. The final summer meeting, held in Fort Worth, Texas, July 24-27 was fitting to the occasion. Over 150 voting and associate members, non-members and family members were there. The weather cooperated (blue-sky days near or over 100 degrees), no buses broke down and the night out dancing and watching the bull rides at the honky tonk was memorable. Probably more memorable for some than others...including the 12 who rode back to the hotel in one car...not a big one at that. Ask Dave Bonar (WBOC-TV, Salisbury, Maryland) for the details. He was the driver. Roddy Peebles (Voice of SW Agric, San Angelo, Tex) and his program crew did a masterful job of making the last NAFB summer meeting a good 'un ... Scott Dewald is back in school at Oklahoma State University working on his master's degree. He left KKYN, Plainview, Tex, the first of the year to work at KWOX, Woodward, Okla, then switched into the halls of ivy ... "Here's the Latest Edition (Addition)" is the title of an announcement we received from Brian and Barbara Baxter. Brian is co-anchor on the Morning Ag Report, Indianapolis, IN. The "edition" (addition) is Jessica Ann Baxter, born June 30 ... Ed Rider has retired from the American Trucking Assoc. staff, but he hasn't stopped working. He's now an independent consultant ... Nice note from Mike Ramsey (WRFD, Columbus, Ohio). He wrote to thank us for setting up an interview with Sec'y Lyng. That proved to be good all around, because Mike took the opportunity to encourage Sec'y Lyng to continue the telephone press conferences that give 30 farm broadcasters access to USDA newsmakers at the same time ... Final note: At the summer NAFB meeting, it was evident that farm broadcasters were and are the pivotal point around which events turn oftentimes. And the relief for drought-stricken farmers is a prime example. We heard and continue to hear about how farm broadcasters help get donors of hay and other commodities together with transporters. We say, "Alllll Righttttt!!!"


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